

REMEMBERING PAUL SARBANES

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, all of us in this body mourn the recent passing of former Senator Paul Sarbanes. Those of us who served with him have known him as one of the finest and most accomplished Senators with whom we have served. And what a great pleasure it was to work with him, on so many issues.

In addition to his impressive legislative accomplishments, Paul Sarbanes was one of the Senate's keenest interrogators and one of the Senate's finest orators. In the Senate community, most of all we knew him for his wit, for his warmth and kindness, and for his decency.

I would like to call to the Senate's attention an insightful remembrance of Senator Sarbanes by Paul Glastris that was published this month by the Washington Monthly.

I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

[From the Washington Monthly, Jan. 1, 2021]

REMEMBERING PAUL SARBANES

HOW WIT, INTEGRITY AND EXPERTISE MADE AMERICA'S FIRST GREEK AMERICAN SENATOR A BEHIND-THE-SCENES WASHINGTON POWER PLAYER.

(By Paul Glastris)

There have been many fine tributes to former U.S. Senator Paul Sarbanes of Maryland, who passed away December 6 at age 87. These encomiums invariably note the near universal high regard he enjoyed in Washington for his intelligence, integrity, humor, and accomplishments—the latter consisting mostly of liberal legislation he managed, via his other attributes, to get Republicans to support. They include, while a young House member, the articles of impeachment against Richard Nixon and, in the Senate, the Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, which toughened regulations and created government oversight of corporate accounting practices after the Enron debacle. He also served on the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee for decades with Joe Biden and was a boss and mentor to a number of the president-elect's senior advisors, including Antony Blinken, his nominee for secretary of state.

But I want to focus on another set of his deeds, ones associated with his role as the leading Greek American in Congress. They begin with what has come to be known as the “Sarbanes Rule.”

The rule dictates that “any Greek American awards dinner should conclude on the same day it begins.” The Senator devised this dictate after patiently sitting through countless such dinners. They would go on interminably due to the fact that the organizers, wanting to acknowledge as many benefactors as possible, would bring to the podium a speaker (usually a wealthy Greek-American businessman) whose job it was to introduce another such speaker, who would then introduce another speaker, who would finally present the award to the person who would then speak, typically at some length (these are Greeks we're talking about).

Since multiple honors were bestowed on any given evening, the result was awards ceremonies that began with cocktails at 6 PM but wouldn't end until well after midnight. At which point the priest would give the benediction, the color guard would march the U.S. and Greek flags out of the

ballroom, the bouzouki band would come out, and everyone would dance for several more hours. Having attended these events regularly in DC from the 1990s until COVID-19, I can attest that after the Senator introduced his rule about a decade ago, the proceedings tightened considerably, with the dancing commencing at a more civilized 10 PM.

It was at one of these dinners that I got to know Sarbanes personally when my late wife Kukula found herself seated next to him. She asked him what kind of cocktail he liked and went to the bar to fetch it. The two of them spent the rest of the evening animatedly chatting about foreign affairs—Kuku, a journalist and the daughter of a diplomat, had strong and informed views on the subject. Our hosts Manny and Marilyn Rouvelas must have noticed, because the next year the place cards showed that Kuku was again seated next to the Senator. When she saw Sarbanes walk into the ballroom, she went to the bar and, remembering his drink of choice (it was one of her superpowers), had it waiting for him when he arrived at the table. He was charmed and delighted; she felt the same about him. For years thereafter the two of them were annual dinner mates. There were far more powerful people in the room than Kuku, but the fact that Sarbanes was content to spend the evening talking with her told me everything I needed to know about his character.

“Unlike many of his contemporary officeholders, Mr. Sarbanes was uncomfortable with the backslapping, glad-handing and grandstanding that often go with public office,” his Washington Post obituary reads. “He avoided the social and party circuit in the nation's capital and rarely spent a night in Washington, preferring instead to drive home to his wife and children in Baltimore.” At these Greek dinners, however, Sarbanes was in his element. While other politicians would drop by (it was a target-rich donor environment), he would stay for hours, chatting with the scores of people who would come to the table to meet him, then eventually excusing himself to work the room, table by table, shaking every hand.

The way he brought order to those dinners with his Sarbanes rule is a small illustration of what made the Senator effective and respected in Washington. Born to Greek immigrant restaurant owners in 1933, Sarbanes earned scholarships and degrees from Princeton, Oxford, and Harvard. He had an intellectual gift for getting to the heart of knotty problems and formulating wise solutions with a wit that put his colleagues at ease. He deployed this genius throughout his career, often in the service of selling unpopular but vitally necessary policies like the return of the Panama Canal. As former Democratic Senate leader Thomas Daschle told the New York Times, when “trying to persuade the caucus to do something difficult, I would use Paul to bring it home, to close the argument.”

In the Greek American community he is most remembered for spearheading—along with another young Greek-American congressman, John Brademas—a 1974 House effort to cut off U.S. arms sales to Turkey after that country invaded and occupied the independent majority-Greek-speaking nation of Cyprus. The Nixon and Ford administrations fiercely opposed the legislation because Turkey, a NATO ally, shared a militarized border with the Soviet Union. But Sarbanes, Brademas, and others in the newly-activated Greek American community countered on not only moral but legal grounds: U.S. statute, they correctly noted, specifically required the administration to cut off arms sales to any country that used such weapons offensively.

Several of the multiple House votes to pass the embargo and then override a presidential veto succeeded by only a one-vote margin, recalls Andy Manatos, then an aide to Senator Tom Eagleton, who was successfully championing similar embargo legislation in the Senate. “It would never have passed in the House without the esteem Paul and John enjoyed,” says Manatos, now the dean of Greek-American lobbyists, adding that Sarbanes and Brademas were two of the three Rhodes Scholars then serving in that body.

The Turkish arms embargo—the first time in modern U.S. history that Congress successfully overturned the White House on a major foreign policy issue—lasted three and a half years before the Carter administration managed to get it repealed. But it was replaced by an agreement in Washington to sell arms to Greece and Turkey on a 7-to-10 basis in order to achieve a military balance in the Aegean, an agreement Sarbanes vigorously defended for years after.

Being seen as a fierce advocate for your own minority ethnic constituency can be risky for any politician seeking higher office. Sarbanes managed to pull it off in 1976 when he became the first Greek American elected to the U.S. Senate (he would be followed by Paul Tsongas and Olympia Snowe). He was hardly a radical on the issue. “I met today with a number of Cypriot foreign ministers” he would joke to friends after rebuffing, say, a group of Greek diner owners demanding he take stronger actions than the Cypriot government itself wanted. But over the subsequent decades, through constant study and engagement with experts on the region, he built a reputation as the man to see on anything regarding the Eastern Mediterranean—from Turkish air threats to Greek territory in the Aegean to the besieged Greek Orthodox patriarchate in Istanbul. Greek prime ministers sought his counsel. So too did U.S. presidents, secretaries of state, and senior diplomats. “In that cerebral way of his, he would analyze the whole situation and explain to people what to do, who to talk to, what to be careful of,” recalls Manatos. “He was hands down far ahead of anyone else in Congress in his thinking about these issues.”

People underestimate, especially in the age of Trump, the degree to which knowledge can be power in Washington. Sarbanes did not. He “studied issues himself rather than rely on staff talking points,” recalls John Sitalides, who worked with the Senator as a GOP staffer on the Senate Banking Committee before starting the Western Policy Center, a security think tank focused on the Eastern Mediterranean. His mastery of substance gave Sarbanes “the freedom to argue and discern based on his own knowledge,” says Sitalides, which in turn earned him the confidence of Senators on both sides of the aisle. That kind of power is typically witnessed only by insiders, though public glimpses of it can sometimes be caught. Nick Larigakis, executive director of the American Hellenic Institute, notes that Sarbanes could be “relied upon to ask the tough and probing questions” on issues important to Greek Americans at confirmation hearings for US ambassadors to the region—an effective way to keep Foggy Bottom on its toes.

If Sarbanes' mind was legendary, so too was his rectitude. He managed a 40-year career in politics—from his first election to the Maryland House of Delegates in 1967 to his retirement from the U.S. Senate in 2007—without a hint of personal scandal. That's no small feat for someone who rose through the often-corrupting culture of Maryland politics (Spiro Agnew, another Greek American politician from Maryland, was not so careful). Sarbanes enjoyed a 48-year marriage to his wife Christine, who passed away in 2009.

And he was famously averse to raising money, even for his own campaigns. (His son John Sarbanes, who represents his father's old congressional district, has carried on that tradition by sponsoring the House's leading campaign finance reform legislation.) Indeed, much of the Senator's career success was due to his savvy longtime chief of staff Peter Marudas, another Greek American who could not only go toe to toe with Sarbanes on the issues but ably manage the more transactional demands of his office.

Joe Biden has spoken optimistically—naïvely in the opinion of many—about his ability as president to work productively with Mitch McConnell and other Republicans on substantive issues. To the degree he honestly believes that, it is because he has done so in his own career, and watched others, like Paul Sarbanes, do so as well.

After the Senator died, Biden tweeted: “Paul Sarbanes and I served together on the Foreign Relations Committee for 30 years. There was no one sharper, more committed, or with firmer principles. And he, too, returned to his family nearly every night. They meant the world to him. Rest In Peace, Paul.”

“DOMESTIC TERRORISM IN THE CAPITOL”

Mr. LEAHY. Madam President, what our Nation witnessed and what Members of Congress and the dedicated staff that work in the Capitol witnessed on January 6 was a deadly attack on one of our most sacred and historic constitutional duties: the count and final certification of the results of our Presidential election. The violent insurrection that occurred in the Capitol, which took the lives of five people, including an officer of the U.S. Capitol Police, was an attack on our democracy. The votes cast in the 2020 Presidential election were counted and recounted. The results were challenged in the courts and ultimately were certified in every single State. Yet, citing the baseless chant that the election was “stolen,” an angry and violent mob stormed the Capitol in an effort to suspend the democratic process, overturn the will of the American people, and ensure that now-former President Trump remained in office. These insurrectionists vandalized the very heart of our government and threatened and harmed those sworn to protect it.

In a column in the *VT Digger*, Haviland Smith, a Vermonter and the first chief of counterterrorism operations for the Central Intelligence Agency, makes the strong case that the insurrection on January 6 was an act of domestic terrorism. I am certain that the FBI and the Department of Justice will continue to investigate and, where appropriate, to file charges and hold these people to account. But in this Chamber, we must heed Mr. Smith's wisdom. As legislative body, as public servants, we must reckon with the lies and anti-democratic discourse that fueled this attack and work to ensure that such an act of domestic terrorism never occurs again.

I ask unanimous consent that the piece written by Haviland Smith, titled “Domestic Terrorism in the Capitol,” be printed in the *RECORD*.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the *RECORD*, as follows:

[From the *VT Digger*, Jan. 8, 2021]

DOMESTIC TERRORISM IN THE CAPITOL

(By Haviland Smith)

It is a fact that the best, noblest political movements often attract the worst kind of violent participants. These people barge in and commit the kinds of violent acts that ultimately change the focus of a previously benign movement to violent terrorist activities. These are viewed quite differently and are generally punished more severely than normal criminal activities.

That is what we are seeing today in the United States. Whether you agree with their goals or not, the vast majority of Trump supporters are non-violent Americans who seek basic changes in American life. They plan to reach their goals by supporting Trump. Right now, that means demonstrating peacefully on his behalf and agreeing with and backing his claims of fraud in the 2020 presidential election which he lost to Joe Biden.

The other part of this picture is the violent one. There is unquestionably a smaller group or groups who, for whatever reasons, see these peaceful demonstrations as an opportunity to raise havoc, to partake in the only form of protest that turns them on—violence.

What none of these folks seem to realize is that in the commission of felonies (entering the U.S. Capitol forcefully, etc.) in the pursuit of political goals (the illegal participation in maintaining Trump in power) they qualify nicely for classification as terrorists.

At one point during the invasion of the Capitol, it was announced by the TV commentators that the invaders were beginning to leave the area. Careful examination of the TV footage at the time shows that the people leaving the area were old, often female—a less fit, less bellicose group. In fact, they were the Capitol invaders who had no intention of getting involved in what clearly was becoming a potentially violent situation. They simply were not up to it politically, mentally or physically.

On the other hand, who stayed behind? Those who were actively interested in becoming involved in violence. Did you notice how many of them wore helmets? The only reason you wear a helmet is to protect yourself from violent attacks on your head and that is clearly what they were doing. They anticipated participating in violence. In addition, the stay-behinds were a major cut in age below those who were leaving. They were the sort who could climb vertical walls, break through windows and throw projectiles at the protecting police force. The fact that 5 people died, over 80 were arrested, and 50 police officers were injured bears eloquent testimony to the fact that this was a terrorist invasion encouraged by the sitting President of the United States, his family members and Republican colleagues.

Ever since the results of the November election became known, the President has created and maintained the fiction that widespread fraud was involved in the Biden win. Whether Trump knows that his major premise is all lies (which would make him a calculating criminal) or doesn't know that his positions are all lies (making him deranged) is almost irrelevant. In either case, calculating or deranged, he is a strangely questionable choice for leader of this country.

Terrorism is the use of fear (terror) and acts of violence to intimidate societies, governments or ideologies. Domestic terrorism is a form of terrorism in which victims with-

in a country are targeted by a perpetrator with the same citizenship” as the victims.

It is worth noting that in the middle of the January 6 invasion, the FBI became involved, presumably on the basis of a logical conclusion that they were looking at an act of domestic terrorism. The FBI's definition of domestic terrorism is “violent, criminal acts committed by individuals and/or groups to further ideological goals stemming from domestic influences, such as those of a political, religious, social, racial or environmental nature.”

It is clear that the invasion of the Capitol building involved criminal activity. It is equally clear that if the criminals are to be identified and tried for their crimes, as has been clearly stated by all the government elements involved, it will be the FBI that will lead the way. They are, after all, the premier law enforcement organization in the United States. As such, they are most likely to be the only organization capable of resolving the many complicated issues involved in this crime, most emphatically including the issue of domestic terrorism, its initiators, motivators and perpetrators.

THE POWER OF HUMAN CHOICES

Mr. LEAHY. Mr. President, amid the chaos of the last 4 years, it is almost difficult to parse out the particular challenge that was 2020. Faced with deadly pandemic wrought by COVID-19 and the ensuing economic crisis, millions of Americans lost their jobs and found themselves in a newfound state of uncertainty and instability. Hundreds of thousands of Americans have died from the pandemic, and millions have been infected. Meanwhile, families across the country have lost their homes and businesses due to worsening hurricanes, floods, and wildfires brought on by intensifying climate change. And there are socioeconomic challenges, too, that linger and grow due to inequality, political division, and racial injustice, all things that have defined the last year.

George Will poignantly wrote on January 1 in the *Washington Post* about the challenges we faced throughout the past year and will continue to face moving forward. In his piece, Mr. Will highlights a greater overarching challenge as well: that we, as humans, do not have all encompassing control over our circumstances. There are greater forces in play; yet our choices and decisions can dictate to some degree the impact of those forces.

As we begin our work in the 117th Congress, I hope we can come together to better equip our families, communities, and society to respond to our current challenges and prepare our country to effectively combat similar challenges in the future.

I ask unanimous consent that Mr. Will's column, “2020 was a booster shot against human hubris,” be printed in the *RECORD*.

There being no objection, the material was ordered to be printed in the *RECORD*, as follows: